GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1835
ANSWERED ON:10.08.2006
MISUSE OF ECHS BY PRIVATE HOSPITALS
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Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware of blatant misuse of Ex-Servicemen Contributory Health Scheme (ECHS) by private hospitals, which are furnishing highly inflated bills;

(b) if so, the details thereof, hospital-wise;

(c) the details of private hospitals dis-empanelled for malpractice during the last three years; and

(d) the fresh steps taken by the Government to curtail unwarranted expenditure of ECHS and also to ensure that ex-servicemen are not inconvenienced?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE)

(a) & (b): On treatment of ECHS patients in empanelled civil facilities, bills are submitted to the concerned ECHS polyclinic. These are then checked at various levels before the final approval by the competent financial authority. Any excess charges are reduced. Thus, there is a well established system of checks to prevent any blatant misuse of this scheme by private hospitals.

(c) No private hospitals have been disempanelled for malpractice. However, one Dental Clinic in Delhi has been disempanelled for not agreeing to ECHS's terms and conditions.

(d) Since most of the polyclinics are now functional, more and more patients are treated at the polyclinic level itself. Patients requiring further treatment are referred to service hospitals available locally and full facilities are utilised. If facilities are not available in service hospitals, only then the patients are referred to empanelled hospitals on the basis of specialist medical opinion. Strict norms are laid down to regulate expenditure and any procedure/treatment not listed in the rate list or prima facie high cost require prior approval of the competent authority. Bills submitted on the termination of treatment are processed through multi-level checks. Unauthorised charges are deducted to ensure strict control over expenditure.